



Written Testimony  
Edward Golinowski, President  
**Opposition to Senate Bill 981**  
**An Act Concerning Pesticides on School Grounds**  
Tuesday, March 5, 2013  
Children Committee

Good morning Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, Senator Linares, Representative Betts and the distinguished member of the Children Committee, my name is Ed Golinowski, I am the President of the Connecticut Environmental Council (CTEC). I appreciate this opportunity to offer my comments in opposition to Senate Bill 981, An Act Concerning Pesticides on School Grounds.

CTEC is a membership organization representing associations and professionals. Our membership includes the Connecticut Groundskeepers Association, the Connecticut Tree Protective Association, the Connecticut Pest Control Association, the Connecticut Irrigation Contractors Association, the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents and the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association.

During the 2005 session, CTEC supported legislation that permitted pest controls to be applied to public and private schools 8<sup>th</sup> grade or under if the applications adhered to an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan. In addition, the schools IPM plan must be consistent with DEEP's Model Pest Control Management Plan. From January 1, 2006 until the July 1, 2010 sunset, school grounds were well maintained using the best management practices of IPM.

In the way of background, state law defines IPM as "the judicious use of pesticides to maintain a pest population at or below an acceptable level, while decreasing the use of pesticides." As a result of IPM's judicious methods of applying lawn care pesticides, over the four years of the pilot program tons of active ingredients were withheld from use on school grounds. During the pilot, the IPM approach has proven to be safe, reliable and affordable way of applying lawn care pesticides, while protecting the financial investment towns have made in athletic fields and school grounds.

Since the July 1, 2010 sunset athletic fields and school grounds have fallen into complete disrepair with pest populations growing out of control making athletic fields unplayable due to hard and uneven playing surfaces and infestations of insects, both stinging and turf damaging. Healthy turf creates a cushion preventing injury to children playing on the surface. Attached to my testimony are two pictures of a middle school baseball field in West Haven. Under the IPM pilot program this athletic field was well maintained and provided a safe playing surface for many different teams during the year. The second picture was taken just 12 months after the ban. This field is unplayable and not safe for students to use. As a result these students from this school are now playing there games on a park and recreations field which is not subject to the ban. Unfortunately this example is being repeated in many towns in the state.

The ban has left our members; the licensed, well educated professionals that take care of school grounds without the proper tools to maintain healthy playing surfaces for our children. Instead we are left with untested, unregulated and often concocted recipes lacking sound science - a true disservice to our children and their safety.

In conclusion, any effort to expand the ban on pesticide use will lead to more athletic fields and school grounds following into unsafe playing conditions. **CTEC supports a proposal being offered by the Environment and Planning & Development Committees, which calls for a task force which will thoroughly review this issue and provide recommendations for consideration during the 2014 session.** We respectfully request that you not move forward with this proposal and support a collaborative balanced task force.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide you with this testimony.



Connecticut Environmental Council

## Before the Ban on Pesticides



## After the Ban on Pesticides

